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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: The International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions - ICARS
- Information from the Danish delegation

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Danish delegation on the above mentioned subject to be raised under "Any other business" at the session of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 17-18 December 2018.

The International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions - ICARS

An International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS) will strengthen global governance in the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance with a particular focus on the practical challenges that Antimicrobial Resistance poses not least in low- and middle-income countries. It will serve as an independent global knowledge node for evidence on antimicrobial drug resistance and support the development and implementation of context-specific solutions for its elimination. The centre will support the translation of policies into evidence-based practices and bring together experiences gained from implementation research across scientific disciplines.

Background

It is widely recognised that Antimicrobial Resistance is one of the biggest threats to global health, prosperity and economic growth. Although governments and international organizations are aware of this issue and agree that antibiotics represents a common good not to be misused for humans nor animals, the scope and urgency of the problem require a globally coordinated response with a focus on One Health actions and interventions. Failure to tackle Antimicrobial Resistance threatens the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - including those on poverty reduction, reduced inequalities, clean water, and sanitation and progress already made will be threatened. In 2018, around one million people will die from infections that were once treatable with antimicrobials, and at the same time, an estimated 5.7 million people die annually because of lack of access to antibiotics. As stressed by WHO, effective antibiotics is a pillar allowing us to live longer, live healthier, and benefit from modern medicine. Health care, including cancer treatment and surgical procedures, depends on effective antimicrobial drugs.

The reality of Antimicrobial Resistance spreading across borders demands the strengthening of global governance arrangements; no country can avoid the consequences when antimicrobials become ineffective. The Tripartite Plus Collaboration of WHO, OIE, FAO and UNEP plays - along with efforts of other key stakeholders - an essential role in creating the policy framework for the battle against Antimicrobial Resistance. These parties have confirmed the need for a stronger global governance to provide practical guidance for sustained effective global action against Antimicrobial Resistance. Major knowledge gaps remain when it comes to translating policy into action. There is an urgent need to develop and coordinate interdisciplinary and multi- sectorial approaches to science-based interventions and develop sustainable and effective solutions, in particular in low- and middle-income countries, and to communicate those solutions globally. To fulfil this ambition, a truly interdisciplinary centre of excellence that takes into account all aspects of the One Health approach is needed. ICARS will be unique in addressing this.

A Hub for International Partnerships

Through collaborative partnerships, ICARS is to underpin the global action plan on Antimicrobial Resistance because:

- The Centre will act as a resource for all national and international bodies, including the private sector, working to mitigate Antimicrobial Resistance. In addition to collecting information on the state-of-art, the Centre will conduct and commission research to close knowledge gaps.
- The Centre will promote a One Health interdisciplinary approach to combating Antimicrobial Resistance that incorporates multiple sectors, domains and disciplines including health, the natural and the social sciences.
- The Centre's research activities will focus on all aspects of the development, transfer and control of Antimicrobial Resistance including the interface between human and animal health and the environment. A particular emphasis is on the identification and promotion of contextual and feasible solutions for intervention, in particular in low- and middle income countries.

The planned organizational set-up of the Centre

The Centre, based in Copenhagen, Denmark, will be established as an independent research- and knowledge dissemination centre with a strong international outreach through multiple partnerships. It is foreseen that it will be managed by a managing director and a management team. Furthermore, a board of trustees composed of representatives of donors and host countries is anticipated for approving the annual work program and the budget. In addition, an advisory forum composed of key stakeholders such as representatives of lead organizations, including WHO, FAO, OIE (The World Organization for Animal Health), UNEP, could support the management in ensuring that the centre is providing synergy and addresses scientific questions and capacity building relevant to those policies. Finally, a scientific advisory board composed of leading scientists in the field is anticipated. A scientific advisory board would be interdisciplinary and provide advice on the Centre's scientific strategy and assist in conducting reviews of project proposals and deliverables from ICARS.

A partnership with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Nairobi, Kenya, will offer an opportunity to coordinate activities with partners in low- and middle-income countries, through the CGIAR System.

Scientific Portfolio

ICARS will apply the Antimicrobial Resistance policy tripod principles, i.e. access, conservation and innovation, with a strong focus on preventing infections of humans and safeguarding antimicrobial drugs. The Centre's research efforts will focus on bringing concrete solutions to pressing challenges in relations to Antimicrobial Resistance. As it is impossible to predict every aspect of tomorrow's challenges today, the Centre is to carry out its efforts in close collaboration with stakeholders ensuring responsiveness to real life needs, with subtle, agile responses, when novel research needs arise. The Centre will also provide support to excellent research projects of the highest international standard dedicated to the development of e.g. alternatives to antimicrobials, and new diagnostics, vaccines or antimicrobials. It is envisaged that a significant amount of the Centre's research and capacity building activities will be carried out in partner countries and in the field.

Funding

ICARS is foreseen to be set up as a medium-sized research centre with a starting budget of up to 60 mill. DKK (ca. 9,2 mill. USD) in 2019. Contingent on the detailed budget and external co-financing, the Danish government is prepared to finance up to app. 75% of the budget in 2019 and a decreasing share of the budget in subsequent years. The budget is expected to gradually expand over the coming years in pace with the development of activities in the Centre to around 35 million USD from 2023, where ICARS is expected to be largely financed through international donors.
